



BAGRS Board Meeting Aug 21,28 & Sep11 (3 Zoom Sessions constituting one Board Meeting) MINUTES

8/21 Called to order at 6:03 pm- **Present:** Mick Spilsbury, Larry Silverman, Lynn Gerber, Richard Murray, Ray Turner and Roger Nicholson. **Absent:** Greg Hile

8/28 Called to order at 6:05 **Present:** M. Spilsbury, L. Silverman, L. Gerber, R. Murray, R. Turner, R. Nicholson and G. Hile

9/11 Called to order at 6 PM-**Present:** M. Spilsbury, L. Silverman, L. Gerber, R. Murray, G. Hile, R. Nicholson. **Absent:** R. Turner

Open Action Items:

Name	Description
Mick	Investigate automated way (maybe only on new website) to get Richard the contact info for live steamers and Russ the new member badge names and addresses in a more efficient manner. Same for new member names to District Supervisors. <i>Current solution put in effect to add line to welcome member email</i>
Mick	Provide name to Larry of member who appears not to have paid but would like to have an Open RR
Mick	Provide Wild Apricot (WA) with the name of club member they should consider to be their primary contact
Mick	Establish email account for general communications
Mick/Ray	Change "Application fee" field name in WA to "Annual dues"
Mick	Create more member friendly communications
Mick	Send email notification to members with background and instructions on how to change their password in WA
Mick/Ray	Add convention merchandise to our website (non car)
Richard	Send Hiller contract to Larry for signature
Richard	Call Accucraft to see if interested in hosting Swap Meet
After Convention	
TBD	Review and rebalance districts and supervisors.
Mick	Obtain District Supervisor job description from Russ (or Google drive)
Mick/Ray	Board to discuss if we should have an application fee

1. Minutes of 8/21 approval deferred until 8/28 meeting. Ray had questions on Website discussion. Minutes approved in 8/28 meeting. Minutes of 8/28 approved in 9/11 meeting.

2. Swap Meet-Mick discussed new Swap Meet date and location: Possibly on November 4th at Tap Plastics San Leandro. 9 am to 1 pm. However, this needs to be confirmed. May be held at Accucraft. Richard to call Cliff at Accucraft to find out if interested.

3. Annual Meeting 2024-Richard Murray announced date for annual meeting: March 9th at Hiller Aviation. Contract to be signed, sent to Larry.



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Mick proposed spreading the traditional VP annual meeting duties to additional board and club members. This met with agreement by Board.

Richard Murray volunteered to give his "Bridges" presentation (from Convention Clinic) at the annual meeting. Only one BAGR member attended so it would be new to club members.

Mick also suggested that we change up the meeting. He offered ideas such as a breakout session for new members to answer their questions and perhaps a session on battery power. More will be discussed in future meetings.

4. Fall open railroads- -The response to a survey on holding open railroads in the fall was favorable. Mick presented the dates and locations for the board to review. There will be an open RR every weekend from 9/10 until 10/22. The board agreed the schedule looked reasonable. Mick mentioned that he could not find evidence that one (not named) person expressing interest in being open, had paid their membership dues. Ray reminded everyone that there is sometimes an issue with our system and/or process. Larry will research the payment. Mick will provide full name to Larry.

5. Convention Car Sales-Approximately 80 remain unsold which is costly to our bottom line. Mick proposed a resolution for board approval: A proposal was made on the following pricing and policy on rebates. The motion was seconded and approved.

PRICING

1 car \$75

2 cars \$130 (\$65 each)

3 cars \$180 (\$60 each)

4 cars \$220 (\$55 each)

REBATES FOR MEMBERS WHO PAID \$100

We agreed not to offer money back to members who paid full price. The Board will field any complaints.

The cars will be mentioned in the T&T, sold through GR News (depending on how sales go to members) and an email to members. Interested parties can place an order on the website which will invoice them. They will need to indicate the location that they would like to pick up their car (s).

We set up area distribution of purchased cars to facilitate sales. Cars can be collected from Larry Silverman, Lynn Gerber, Mick Spilsbury, Ray Turner and Richard Murray. Russ has 70 cars remaining after providing cars for Mick and Larry distribution sites. Dennis Ahearn of Sacramento has indicated he could move some cars.

Mick and Ray will work together to get additional merchandise up on the website.

6. T&T Update-Roger provided some observations on the T&T. It will look predominantly as it does today. It will have larger font and larger pictures so the result will be a slightly longer T&T. Open railroads will be moved more toward the front of the newsletter to generate interest. Only the last name and description of the railroad will appear along with pictures. He suggested putting addresses at



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end of T&T. He also mentioned he will not be putting driving directions in the T&T. There will now be an email accompanying the T&T with pictures to entice the members to open the newsletter.

The T&T logs the “open” rate. It has a 79% open rate which is almost the same as the President’s Email communications open rate.

7. **Vice President position-** Mick proposed that Roger Nicolson take on the role of Vice President. The duties will include mentoring new members. The Annual Meeting will not be the sole responsibility of the VP (see discussion in item #3 above). The question was asked of Roger if he was concerned about publishing the T&T as well as conducting VP duties. Roger indicated he was comfortable with being able to perform both positions.

8. **Financial report-** Larry provided the quarterly report and reminded the board that it only covers through the end of June. As of the 2nd quarter we have a total of \$240,133 in our three bank accounts. Our operating account income YTD was \$25,121 and our operating expenses were \$23,956 for a net profit of \$1,165. The convention account income was \$61,116 and expenses \$49,462. This report was “pre” most convention expense transactions and some income. There will be a detailed final Convention financial report provided as soon as all the income and expenses are available, and a specific meeting of the board will be held to review the results.

9. **Membership report-** Ray informed the board that we had 8 new members in the June/July period and 4 new members in August through the 28th. In March we dipped in membership to 289 but are now back to 302 active members. We increased membership by 40 members in the last 12 months. He reminded us that most clubs are seeing declining membership whereas we are holding steady.

A discussion on membership dues/fees was held. First it appears the Membership dues in Wild Apricot are characterized as “Application Fees”. This needs to be changed.

Also, Wild Apricot creates invoices when the member pays, but they need to be created when we communicate the payment is due. Mick also stated we need to create more member friendly communications.

There was a motion to change the period where dues will apply to the next fiscal year from September to October. The motion was seconded and approved. The new member joining from Oct 1 thru December will have their dues applied to the following Jan-Dec period.

It was determined that there should be a special notification to those new members who join between September and end of December, informing them that their dues will apply to the following year. They should be apprised that after that year they will receive an invoice and the letter should explain the process.

A motion was raised to leave the annual dues at \$40.00. The motion was seconded and was passed unanimously.



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There was a discussion on whether we should have a member status called “provisional” or “perspective”. It as agreed to pursue this discussion at a later date.

10. **Live Steam Report**-Richard reported that there will be 3 steamer events in September; Ardenwood, Los Altos and a steam up at Richard’s railroad. Richard mentioned that an article was published in Punch Magazine that while it covered his garden railroad, it also included promotion and favorable mention of the BAGRS club. He asked if it was possible to include portions of the article in the T&T. Roger felt that it would not be an issue and we would attribute it properly to the magazine.

11. **Marketing/outreach report**-Mick indicated that we are ‘closing in’ on 1,900 followers on our Instagram site. He noted that posting of videos on YouTube was paused as other issues were taking up time but will be starting again soon.

A suggestion was made that we no longer use the term ‘marketing’ and instead adopt the term “Outreach” which was agreed to be the right approach going forward. The board also discussed the role of social media and all agreed while it is important we need to determine a way to track the reason new members join, including if it was due to our social media efforts. A question will be added to our paper and electronic application form.

12. **Website**-The board revisited the double sign /log in requirement. Some board members thought we left it that we were going to push back on the developers. Roger stated that he did not feel it technically possible to eliminate.

Wild Apricot is compatible with our website tool. Mick would like more conversation with Wild Apricot as well as with the board regarding what should be included in the Members Only section. What is in the WordPress area that needs protection, e.g. T&T? Do we want non-members to see a version of the T&T? The discussion concluded with having Mick look at the issues and coming back to the board. (Subsequently Mick established contact with a WA support person who claims that WA can integrate a WordPress site with SSO though our developer continues to say that the WA integration tool for SSO is flawed)

Mick brought up that members have been receiving emails from Wild Apricot to change their passwords. The emails are on the rude side, and we would have appreciated the opportunity to notify our members before they started sending out the password change requests. Mick indicated we will be sending out an email notification to our members with instructions and also including that same information in the T&T.

Another issue discussed was the discovery that emails have been going to a “publisher” account. It’s not an email account we have associated with anyone, so don’t know where they are going. This brought up two issues: We need a general email (and someone to man it) to receive general communications. Most currently go to the Membership email although having nothing to do with Membership. WA should also be informed who is their primary contact for BAGRS.



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13. Lynn & Mick have both signed Mechanics Bank forms to be signers on/have access to BAGRS accounts as back ups for Larry.

Keep in Mind	Completed Action Items from Previous Meeting
Mick: following up with Chicago Area GRS about how they help members with RR construction guidance	Mick Researched cost of single log on functionality for new website. See discussion in minutes
Mick: moved draft memo and discovery of automated features on Wild Apricot to after website review	Mick drafted a survey for membership re their general involvement and satisfaction with BAGRS.

NEXT MEETING:

The meetings of the Board were a series of one hour zoom sessions from 6-7 pm on:

Monday August 21 Adjourned at 7:10

Monday August 28th Adjourned at 7:03

Monday September 11th Adjourned at 7:07

Next meeting will be **October 2nd** from 6-7 pm on the sole topic of the Convention and the financial results. There will be a regular meeting of the board on **October 9th** from 6-7 PM. (The topics of these 2 meetings were subsequently reversed)

Respectfully submitted for approval
Lynn Gerber
Secretary